

## South King County Projects Update

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## South King County traffic closures this week

### Interstate 5

- Monday through Thursday nights crews will close the three left lanes of northbound I-5 between the Pierce County line and S. 320<sup>th</sup> to work on pavement improvements. The first lane will close at 8 p.m., the second at 10 p.m., and the third at 11 p.m. All northbound lanes will reopen by 5 a.m. each morning.

## WSDOT reopens 244th Avenue SE near Maple Valley

Last week crews reopened 244th Avenue SE on the south side of SR 18. The road had been closed since last August between SE 208<sup>th</sup> and SE 216<sup>th</sup> streets while crews removed two drainage structures and [built a bridge over Taylor Creek](#). The new bridge will improve passage for the salmon that swim in the creek.

Drivers should observe the advisory 25 mph speed limit on 244<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE from the south side of the new bridge to the north side of the SR 18/244<sup>th</sup> interchange. The advisory speed limit is reduced because this area remains a busy construction zone.

The new bridge is part of a project to [relieve congestion and improve safety on SR 18](#) between Maple Valley and Issaquah Hobart Road by widening the highway from two to four lanes. WSDOT and Atkinson Construction expect to complete SR 18 widening in fall 2006.

## Contractor selected to build SR 516 improvements in Covington/Maple Valley

Yesterday WSDOT selected Road Construction Northwest of Renton to build [improvements to SR 516](#) in the Covington/Maple Valley area. Since 1999, drivers have been involved in 50 collisions in this two-lane section of SR 516. Forty-five of these 50 collisions were rear-enders. Drivers who wish to make a left turn must block a lane of through traffic until they turn.

To make the roadway safer and reduce congestion, in this project we'll:

- add a two-way left-turn lane
- widen lanes and shoulders
- build bus pull-outs with sidewalks on either side of the road
- install street lighting

We expect to begin construction this spring and complete the work this fall. The project is funded in part by the 2003 gas tax ([Nickel funding](#)).

## Reducing rubbernecking and more in this quarter's Gray Notebook

We're always investigating new ways to make your roadways safer. One of these is a "Portable Incident Screen" pilot project in the Spokane area. These are custom-built screens that are put up at traffic incident sites to shield the view of the accident scene from motorists driving by. The intent is to stop rubberneckers from slowing down traffic, and to prevent possible secondary accidents. You can read more about this project in our latest issue of our quarterly performance report, the [Gray Notebook](#).

Also included in this quarter's report is a study of 21 projects with safety enhancements, including two in south King County, which indicates that the number of collisions per year was reduced by 39%. You can also read our annual environmental and pavement condition updates in the Gray Notebook.

## Share a ride, go to London: exercise your Wheel Options

It's almost time for the semi-annual [Wheel Options](#) campaign. This spring's campaign runs from March 13-24. If you commute to work by a method other than driving alone twice during the two-week period, you can enter for a chance to win a five-day trip for two to London or other prizes. And now commuters have even more options with the recent opening of south King County's largest transit facility, the new [Federal Way Transit Center](#), and the new [HOV ramps at S. 317<sup>th</sup>](#).

## Highway advisory radio updates

Tune your radio to 1520 AM to hear a new project update each week on I-5 in Federal Way. Questions or comments? E-mail [Laura Johnson](#).

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